

STORY 88.

THE COURTESY OF A MUSLIM RULER.

SULTAN NASIR-UL-DIN a ruler of the slave dynasty did not take anything from the royal treasury but used to copy books, which he sold, and with the proceeds of the sale supported his family.

One day he was busy with the work of copying when one of his courtiers who was sitting by pointed out what he considered to be a mistake. The Sultan at once drew a circle round the word, but when the said courtier left he erased the circle.

Another courtier who was present, and who had seen everything could not help saying, "Sire, when that gentleman pointed to a word you put a mark round it which meant that you admitted the mistake. Now that he has gone you have erased the mark. What does this mean?"

The Sultan replied, "The truth is that the word pointed out by the gentleman, was not wrong. I marked it only because if I had told him that he himself was wrong he would have been put to shame. To avoid this I marked the word and satisfied him. It would have been discourteous on my part to give him a rebuff when he meant to do me a service."

STORY 89.

HOW SHAB-UD-DIN REFUSED TO CALL A TYRANT JUST.

SULTAN MOHD TUGHLAK of Delhi was a strange mixture of good and bad qualities. Of his bad qualities the most monstrous was his cruelty. In his time there lived in Delhi a Muslim of the name of Shab-ud-Din who was called the truth-teller. The Sultan was aware that the people generally called him a tyrant. In order to have this stigma removed from his name he called upon Shab-ud-Din to issue a proclamation justifying his cruel deeds and calling him a just ruler. He also insisted that in the Friday sermons his name should be mentioned as Sultan Mohd Tughlak the just.

Those who knew the temper of Mohd Tughlak asked Shab-ud-Din to carry out his wish and thus escape the consequences of his wrath. But Shab-ud-Din was made of stern stuff. He refused point blank to carry out the Sultan's wish saying he could not call darkness light or night day. The king was a tyrant and a tyrant he must be called.

The result of this plain speaking was what had been anticipated. The tyrant had him hurled from the battlement of the fort. Shab-ud-Din gave up his life for truth.